



A blast from the past
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Singing for the sheer joy of it

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Monday, April 12, 2004

Conestoga College, Kitchener

36th Year — No. 14

Conestoga achieves No. 1 overall rating again

For the sixth straight year, composite results from the independent Key Performance Indicator (KPI) surveys show that Conestoga College is the overall No. 1 rated public college in Ontario.

Two outside professional research firms conduct the KPI surveys annually for the province's Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. The four independ-

KPI survey results a team effort: Tibbits

ently administered surveys measure graduate employment, graduate satisfaction, employer satisfaction and student satisfaction.

Taking the composite score of the four surveys (the graduate employment rate, plus the responses of "very satisfied" and "satisfied"

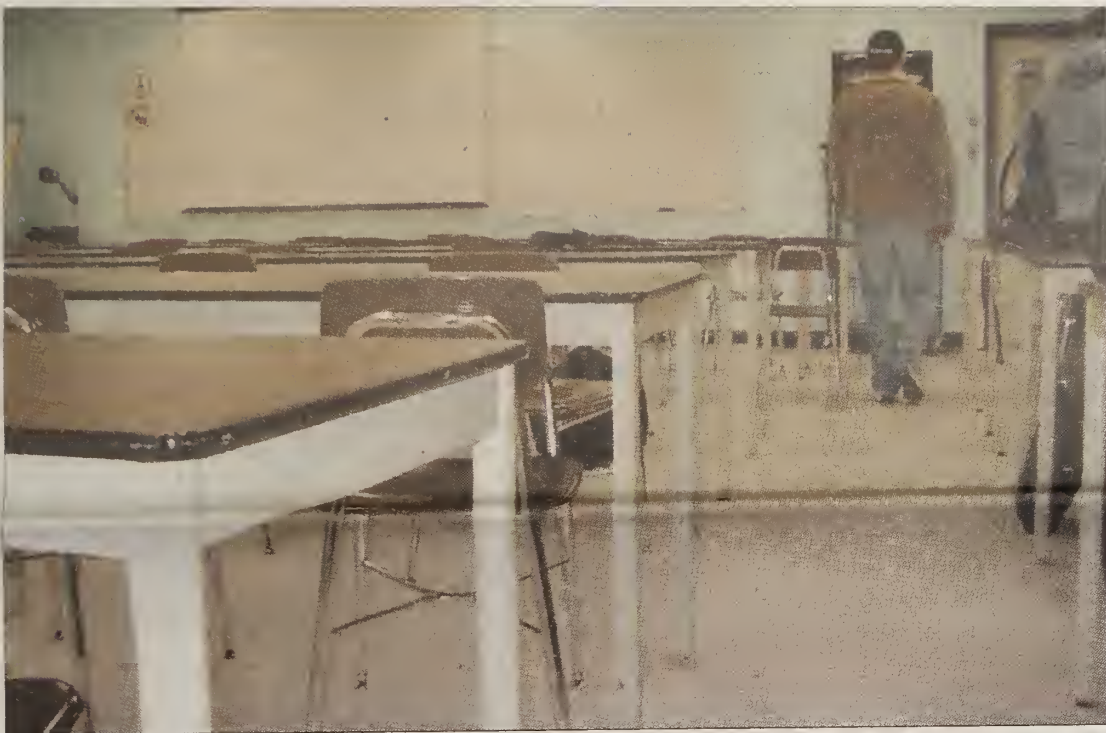
from the three satisfaction surveys), Conestoga emerges with an overall average of 87.85, best among the 21 colleges of applied arts and technology and the three institutes of technology and advanced learning.

"The continuation of

Conestoga's outstanding performance on these KPI surveys is certainly good news," Conestoga President John Tibbits said in a press release.

"It validates our attention to quality and our desire to ensure that a Conestoga education has rele-

vance, value and excellence. The efforts of all our employees have made this possible; so, too, has our commitment to work closely with student association representatives. Conestoga has achieved great things in the last few years. The KPI results will encourage us to continue to move forward and to find ways to assess and improve our quality even more."



(Photo by Desiree Finhert)

Classes were cancelled after marketing teacher Edward Brooker was dismissed in late March.

Students shocked by firing

By DESIREE FINHERT

Classes were cancelled for Conestoga marketing students after their co-ordinator was fired in late March.

Marketing teacher Edward Brooker was dismissed by the college two weeks before the end of the academic year. His students found out Tuesday morning when they arrived for class and found it cancelled.

No explanation was given to the students regarding their teacher's dismissal.

Those who went to speak to the chair of the business department were told that information about the dismissal would not be disclosed because it was a private matter, but that dismissing a teacher is not something that is taken lightly.

Third-year marketing student Chris Donnelly, 27, was in the group who went to speak with the chair, Faye McKay.

He said he briefly overheard that another teacher would be assigned to Brooker's classes to help them run smoothly until the end of the year.

"I don't know how they can do that?" said Donnelly, who won his marketing competition because of Brooker's efforts. "There's such a short time left. It would be very difficult for someone to step in."

McKay was unavailable for comment.

Brooker taught retail, advanced place marketing and international marketing, which he developed along with the textbook.

Chris McCormic, 25, is one of the third-year students prepared to write letters addressed to the college's senior management in order to have Brooker reinstated.

"At this point we are going to write letters, each of us, to tell them what he meant to us as a teacher," said McCormic. "We're not going to storm the school or anything."

Third-year student Maria Petracic, 23, said it was a shock to hear that one of her favourite teachers has been dismissed.

"I can just about guarantee that every person who has gone through the marketing program can say that Ed fought for us," said Petracic. "Now we're at the point where we have to fight for him. We want to

get him back here."

Petracic is graduating this year and wants to do corporate events planning, a course that Brooker taught. She said even though she will not be back next year she wants Brooker to continue teaching.

"I care because he's made an impact on my life," said Petracic. "He's the spirit of the marketing department."

At 3:02 on Tuesday faculty was informed of his dismissal by a mass email saying he was no longer employed at the college. Brooker's email address was also cancelled and it is uncertain whether he received any of the emails his students sent him.

Brooker was contacted at home and said he fully supports the students' concerns.

"I don't think they were considered in this decision," said Brooker regarding his dismissal.

Brooker verified that a grievance has been filed, but declined an interview.

"I'm not afraid to answer any questions," said Brooker. "I just don't know that now is the appropriate time."

Continued on Page 2

CSI president asks for vote of confidence

By JAMES CLARK

The board of Conestoga Students Inc. (CSI) will hold a vote of confidence on April 13 to determine if Justin Falconer should remain as president of the association.

Falconer asked the board to be prepared for a vote of confidence during a CSI board meeting on March 30.

He said he would resign as president if the vote goes against him.

When the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m., Falconer asked the board to stay a few minutes longer because he wanted to say something.

He then delivered a speech that lasted nearly 15 minutes.

Falconer stressed that everything he said was his own opinion and not that of the board.

"I just feel this board is falling apart," said Falconer, choking back tears. "There is a potential that just isn't here yet and we just don't see it."

Falconer went on to say that he feels he is doing the right thing and the organization can turn things around.

"Next year is going to be the best year yet," said Falconer.

Nelofer Ahmed, a board member and first-year police foundations student, said she agrees with Falconer.

She said Falconer should not be blamed for the state of the board.

"It's not Justin's (Falconer) fault at all," said Ahmed.

She said at the beginning of the year the board was committed but lost their focus as the year went on.

In a phone interview the next day Falconer said the vote of confidence is a logical step in terms of moving in the right direction.

"No one in CSI's history has looked to the future," said Falconer. "There is a potential in each one of these board members

to look forward."

He said his resignation may be the only way to advance.

"Maybe I'm a builder and they want a maintainer, maybe I am fast and they want someone slower, maybe I am an introvert and they want an extrovert. I don't know," Falconer said.

He said whatever the board decides, it will be the right decision.

"Even if I lose, it's not going to be a sad day," said Falconer. "They will find a new leader and they will do fine."

Falconer said he will be able to move on if he does resign as president. If that happens, Scott Ingram-Cotton will begin the next school year as president of CSI.

During the same meeting the board voted in favour of allowing Falconer to run for a position on the College Student Alliance (CSA) executive.

Falconer said he would be interested in the position of president at the organization. He said he would have to devote one day a week to the position, and would have to go Queen's Park and support school government organizations, such as CSI.

The CSA is a non-profit organization that allows students and student governments to bring issues to provincial and federal governments.

Falconer estimated it would cost CSI approximately \$5,000 a year to fund trips to Toronto and pay conference fees.

He said the money is more like an investment because he will make sure students all across the province will see improvements in their schools.

The election for the CSA executive will take place during the organization's annual general meeting the first weekend of May at Conestoga College.

Now deep thoughts ...with Conestoga College

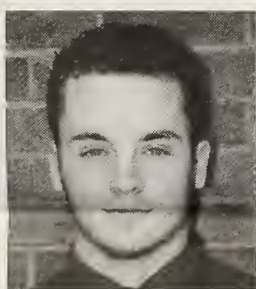
Random questions answered by random students

What is the dumbest thing you've ever done on a bet or date?



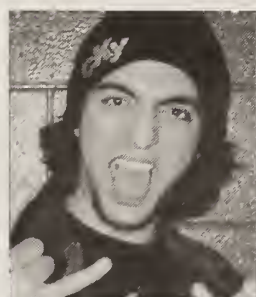
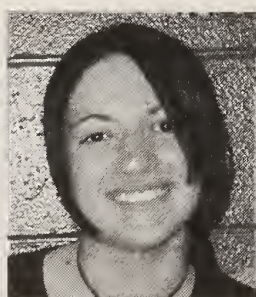
"I was bet to walk through a fire. It was just a couple of steps, but it was still pretty dumb."
Kyle Martin

"I ate a bee for \$5. It was pretty gross and awful. But hey, \$5 is a lot of money when you're 16."
Jade Martindale



"I asked my best friend's mom out on a date. I was wasted. She loves me, but I didn't get the date."
Kayle Miles

"I faked an orgasm in my high school cafeteria. I also did it in the food court at the mall."
Carol Khbels



"I've played baseball with Roman candles. And then my buddy shot me in the face with one."
Dave Ambrad

"I ate a ladybug for \$1. I chewed it and everything and the other guy backed down. I never got my buck."
Colin Burwell



"It involved a stuffed buffalo, some ice cubes and that's all you need to know!"
Kevin Roselli

Smile Conestoga, you could be our next respondent!

College receives grant to fund carpentry program for women

By JEFF HEUCHERT

Conestoga College's Women In Skilled Trades program has received a grant worth \$190,000 from the Ontario Women's Directorate, to fund a new pre-apprenticeship carpentry program for women.

Over the past three years the Women In Skilled Trades program has offered women numerous courses in fields such as precision machining, tool and die making, and millwright.

Tanja Gancevich, job developer and co-ordinator for the Women In Skilled Trades program, says each year the Ontario Women's

Directorate decides what kind of program to fund.

"Obviously that's where they see growth going," says Gancevich, about carpentry.

Those who complete the program will receive a certificate, and therefore also have completed the equivalent of level-one apprenticeship theory, in the carpentry trade.

Gancevich figures those with the certificate will then have to write an exemption exam in the carpentry trade, to be recognized as level-one apprentices.

The program starts in early August and will be held at the Guelph campus because they have the only carpentry shop.

It runs 40 weeks, with the first 30 being in-class, and the last 10 giving students on-the-job training.

The program only has a 20-student capacity, and Gancevich expects there to be well over that number of students applying for it.

The college will be holding information sessions at the Guelph campus to answer questions as well as to promote the importance of apprenticeships and skilled trades programs.

All the sessions will be from 7 to 8:30 p.m. The dates are April 14, 20 and 28. For more information or to reserve a spot you can call the campus at 1-519-824-9390.

'It's going to be sad not seeing him around'

Continued from Page 1

Walter Boettger, president of OPSEU local 237, said in a dispute situation, or any kind of situation, where a party feels there is a violation of a statute, a grievance process is used.

"We have our dispute resolution process, which involves gathering data and keeping information as clean as possible," said Boettger. "To maintain the integrity of the process the veil of confidence has to be applied."

The grievance process involves meeting with the parties involved for a resolution. Failing that, a third party arbitrator is asked to the meetings.

"We are very process oriented," said Boettger, who said there is no definitive time period for arbitra-

tion.

Third-year student Erin Laine, 21, said Brooker has been her teacher since first year.

"He's always been a really good teacher to me, and a friend," said Laine. "It's going to be sad not seeing him around for the end of our third year."

Brooker would normally present the international award at the marketing awards banquet. Laine's group was nominated for their marketing strategy on exporting customized handbags to Australia.

"I know my group wouldn't have gotten nominated if he hadn't been there every step of the way," said Laine. "I don't think it's right that he won't be speaking at the banquet about what we had to do to get there."

COUNSELLOR'S CORNER: Graduation

For many of you, the end of this semester represents the end of your current studies at Conestoga College. You may be ready to begin a new career or ongoing studies. You may be planning to move to a new city or to travel. This transition will be a welcome relief from studying, projects, late nights, and too-short days.

You should feel proud of your accomplishments. You have reached a goal that seemed so far away when you began. Sometimes, you may experience anxiety or doubts: the life you have known is about to change, and you aren't exactly sure what the next part of your life will look like. There may be sadness as you leave behind friendships and support systems. You might even miss teachers who have been mentors to you. If you remember back to your first semester here, you may have had many of these same feelings, but with time you developed new relationships and opened up to new experiences.

So, as you graduate, take away the gifts of a College diploma, new skills, and confidence in your achievements.



Congratulations!

A Message from Student Services

New contract ratified

By JASON SMITH

Ontario's community college faculty has officially ratified their new two-year agreement.

The agreement, hammered out in the dim hours just prior to a possible strike last month, will see wages increase by 7.5 per cent over the next two years.

Represented by the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU), 8,600 members cast their votes, 95 per cent of which were in favour to accept and ratify the agreement. Conestoga College members voted 89.6 per cent in favour of ratification.

"This vote brings a tough round of bargaining to a successful close," said bargaining team chair Ted Montgomery. "We achieved this settlement because members were completely ready to strike. It was pressure from our members at all 24 colleges that enabled the bargaining team to get a good contract just hours from a strike deadline."

Walter Boettger, president of OPSEU Local 237, said the process made in this round of bargaining will help the union set the stage for the next round which will start in the fall.

"We are looking forward to the task forces on workload and retiree benefits," he said.

A big factor through the bargaining has been faculty workload. Due to this concern, the issue will be studied by a joint task force in preparation for the next round of bargaining. The task force will look into the impact of e-learning, class size, student numbers, curriculum and professional development, alternative approaches to teaching, scheduling of teaching hours and other issues affecting workload. The task force will report to both sides by November.

The new agreement also implements a policy to accommodate faculty returning to work from illnesses.

Gap in budget may put hole in your pocket

By DESIREE FINHERT

Conestoga College's Doon campus has overextended its technology budget for the 2004/2005 academic year.

Conestoga Students Inc. (CSI) discussed ways to reduce the over expenditure at a board of directors' meeting on March 15.

Richard Gibson, Conestoga's chief information officer, submitted a technology infrastructure report showing spending plans of just over \$1.6 million.

The report showed a gap in funding of \$260,071.

As a result of the shortfall some students will be paying a higher technology fee.

CSI vice-president Scott Ingram-Cotton was originally booed at by other CSI directors when he suggested increasing the student technology fee by \$25 per student, to close the gap.

"It gives you an extra \$317,000 to work with," said Ingram-Cotton, a graduating civil engineering student. "It's only a case of beer."

CSI's website now states that there will be an increase in the fee due to the lack of available funding from the government and other sponsors.

Previously, it was only first year students who paid \$200 towards the technology fee as part of their student activity fees. Students in second year paid \$150, and third-year students paid \$175.

Now all students in the 2004/2005 year will be paying \$200 despite their year of study.

Gibson is responsible for the college's information and technology services including the infrastructure of labs, computer systems and technology financing. He predicts



(Photo by Desiree Finherth)

Richard Gibson, Conestoga's chief information officer, considers the technology budget for the 2004/2005 academic year at a board of directors meeting on March 15.

the technology fee revenue generated by next year's students will be approximately \$1.1 million.

The college contributes \$200,000 to the technology budget. Together, the college's contribution and the student fees equal \$1.3 million in available funds.

Gibson said the college is struggling with the technology budget and is anticipating anywhere from \$1-million to \$3-million shortfall.

"I'm at a point now where we have a \$260,071 gap between the available dollars and what we want to spend," said Gibson. "We need to put a reasonable technology fee in place."

The technology fee is used to update computer software, computer equipment and services.

One of the places Conestoga plans to spend part of the technology budget is on security.

Security and theft prevention improvements for the computer labs will cost approximately \$27,500. Gibson is planning to use aluminum cases to house parts of computer equipment and wants to install cameras and telephones in the labs. Gibson and Conestoga's head of security Al Hunter are considering locking lab doors when they are not in use and arming them with alarms.

Gibson said the way the school has been operating is not the way it can continue to operate.

"I go in the labs and nobody has an overnight pass," said Gibson. "The one thing I am going to do is enforce that students have their student card on them."

Gibson said the school lost about a \$1,000 and a day and a half of lab use when the memory and video cards were stolen from 40 computers in March.

"They bent back all the brackets on the computer and got around inside with small hands," said Gibson. "They must have had time to do this."

One of the items stricken from the budget was a \$25,000 wireless pilot in the Learning Resource Centre.

Gibson said there has been some demand for the hardware, which will provide Internet activity in remote locations.

CSI director Jessica Wismer, 19, asked if there was a program demand for the wireless pilot?

"Because if there isn't a program demand than you could cut it," said Wismer, a marketing student. "That's a lot of money and it seems like just a bonus for people who have laptops."

The college also considered offering 50 remote access stations. This service would have allowed Conestoga students to access the school's programs and files from home via the Internet.

Gibson said this would start small and grow over the next few years.

"We would initially look at setting up about 15 software packages with a certain number of licences, and would add to this each year," said Gibson.

The system is provided by Citrix, which uses a Windows licence certificate. Each licence is \$25,000. For 50 stations the school would pay a one-time price of \$27,500 for licences.

To promote the remote access service, seven servers will be installed at \$9,000 each. The software costs \$15,000 and 300 Window terminal service licences will be bought at \$50 each.

The remote access portion of the budget totals \$129,800.

CSI suggested that there be a reduction in the number of remote access stations. However, the reduction amount is undetermined and further budget reductions are being discussed.

Student lucky after car bursts into flames

By CARLA KOWALYK

The Kitchener fire department was called to the college on March 30 to extinguish a car fire that left only the vehicle's charred frame.

Al Hunter, chief of security at the college, said a student entered Lot 12 where his car died. The student and his passenger got out of the car and noticed smoke billowing out from under the hood. They then pushed it down to the west end of the parking lot away from other vehicles.


"They did it to avoid any damage

to other vehicles," he said. "It was certainly a nice thing to do, although I'm not sure it was the safest."

Hunter said the student is very lucky that there were no serious injuries, and that the situation could have ended differently.

The car has since been removed.

"It's pretty much a write-off," he said. "And, although the situation didn't cause any injuries, and the student was thinking of others, we don't encourage anyone to do what was done. We're just looking out for your safety."



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CSI president takes a bold step for the association

In a school year when Conestoga Students Inc. (CSI) couldn't seem to do anything right, the president has taken it upon himself to try and make things better.

Justin Falconer has asked for a vote of confidence from the CSI board of directors.

If the vote goes against him, Falconer announced he will resign as president of the CSI.

This could be seen as the drastic measure that has to be taken to turn around an organization that, at least for the time being, has a tarnished reputation.

The CSI is obviously the first to recognize that any time you're in charge of students' money, there's going to be a watchful eye on how that money is spent.

This is where the CSI has faced much of its criticism this year.

The CSI has taken heat on numerous issues such as poor attendance to many of its events, the televisions the CSI purchased to put up in the halls for advertising purposes and the CSI executive's trip to Talisman ski resort for what Falconer called an "intensive policy weekend." There were other issues as well. In October there was a botched board of directors' election, which resulted in three candidates being disqualified, and in November, a board of directors member won free tickets to Daytona, given away at a CSI-run event.

This vote proves to students Falconer is not oblivious to the fact that the CSI might not be a perfectly run organization.

In a time when someone has to be responsible for the CSI, it's only fitting the president stands up and faces the music.

Falconer said in a past interview that he's looking to build the CSI and wants to look toward the future, and why not? What does the CSI have to lose?

If the board of directors is looking to improve the college's atmosphere and entertain students with better events, all within one year, it's probably not going to happen. Don't they have to know what students don't want, before they can give them what they want?

It only seems logical someone would have to be around for a while to see what works and what doesn't.

The reality is, with this vote of confidence, Falconer is doing something no other person, in his situation, would probably ever do. He is stepping to the plate, and is willing to face the consequences of the board's decision.

When do we see other public figures, responsible for our money, take such a dignified step? This is an admirable move, and Falconer deserves our respect for putting his job on the line, to better the organization.

We can only hope whoever the CSI president is next year shows us the same dedication to the organization Falconer clearly has.



How am I supposed to get a tan like this?

Three-time killer walks free

In a little over a year, a rapist and three-time killer will be released from jail and will be able to walk freely among us. Her punishment for her crimes? Twelve years imprisonment.

It is one of the most horrifying examples of how the Canadian justice system can screw up.

Does the name Karla Homolka ring a bell? Well, just to refresh your memory, she helped kidnap, drug, rape and kill 14-year-old Leslie Mahaffy, 15-year-old Kristen French and her own baby sister, 15-year-old Tammy Lyn Homolka.

Most students are old enough to remember the hunt for the missing girls in 1991, being only eight, nine or 10 years old at the time.

And here we are almost 13 years later and the name Karla Homolka still sends chills down people's spines.

As a plea bargain deal, Homolka agreed to testify against her husband in the murder trials. Homolka received only a 12-year sentence - five years for each girl and two for her sister.

And on July 5, 2005, Homolka will be set free, riding along on what has been called "the deal of the century."

As part of the plea bargain Homolka was supposed to divulge



Carla Kowalyk

Opinion

any information about any other rape and murder besides French's and Mahaffy's that she was aware of. If she didn't the bargain would be null and void.

At the time of the signing Homolka hadn't told anyone of the drugging, rape and death of her sister, or the drugging and rape of a young girl only known as Jane Doe. I may not be a lawyer but isn't this withholding information? Why wasn't the bargain stricken down?

I find it ironic that Homolka all along has been saying she is a victim of wife abuse, that her counterpart Paul Bernardo beat her and that's why she went along with the kidnapping and murders.

Homolka had many chances to say no and go to the police. She even had a chance to set both kidnapped girls free and leave with them when Bernardo wasn't around.

It wasn't until Homolka was beaten badly with a flashlight by Bernardo that she finally went to

the police, telling the story of what happened to Mahaffy and French.

Sure, she can sit by and watch Bernardo brutally beat both girls and not do anything about it, but when it comes to her being beaten, she goes straight to the authorities.

According to a Jan. 5, 2004 article in the Toronto Sun, when Homolka applied for parole that month the National Parole Board turned her down saying she was still in a state where she could commit a crime possibly involving "the death or serious harm" of another person.

Wait? And this is the same person who will walk free in 15 months? If she hasn't changed in 11 years, what makes them think she will change by the end of her sentence?

Cell mates of Homolka's at the facility in Joilette, not far from Montreal where she is being kept, say she is scared of what will happen to her when she is released - she still views herself as the victim.

Maybe Homolka should have thought of that before she helped drug, rape and eventually kill her baby sister and help kidnap, rape, drug and murder two innocent young girls.



Letters are welcome

Spoke welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be signed and include the name and telephone number of the writer. Writers will be contacted for verification.

No unsigned letters will be published. Letters should be no longer than 500 words.

Spoke reserves the right to edit any letter for publication.

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Scholarship honours student's life

By DESIREE FINHERT

Clutching a tissue in one hand and a picture in the other she looks down at her son and sobs. She has a cold, but that is not why her face is red and she hasn't slept. Each photo is different in its own way, although their focus is the same. She returns the black and white James Dean-style photo to the ensemble and picks another. The last photo of Michael was taken a week before he died, but she says she didn't know it at the time.

Michael Borutski, 21, was in his last year of mechanical engineering at Conestoga College and doing a work term in Guelph. Now another Conestoga student will be attending classes in his memory.

Wendy and Steve Borutski have decided to create a scholarship for the mechanical engineering students at the college to preserve their son's name after he died in a car accident on Dec. 20, last year.

"When the accident happened and we lost him, I thought of a scholarship right away," says Wendy, a former training consultant for the college. A glossy, new tattoo, inscribing Michael's name, peeks out from under her shirt cuff. "We can remember his name and help other students."

She weeps and gasps remembering what the police had told her of the night Michael was driving down an unfamiliar street. It was an early Saturday morning. Michael was driving three of his friends back to his house in Cambridge

when he missed a turn. He was driving his friend's Intrepid because she was tired. The street was tree lined and icy.

According to police, Michael was speeding and lost control of the car on the curve. The car hit a tree on Michael's side. The impact was not enough to deploy the airbags, but it was enough to cause a fatal head injury, killing Michael instantly.

Wiping her eyes, his mother says there seemed to be a terrible lineup of circumstances to make him the unlucky person.

"If he had been on a different street without a tree, he might have slid into a snow bank," she reasons. "If there had not been ice on the road, he might have kept on going."

It might have looked like a harmless accident. There wasn't a mark on Michael to say that he was hurt and his three passengers were fine.

"His death was just a senseless tragedy for us. In one second he was gone."

His mother says he meant the world to the whole family and her plea is for young people to take extra care.

"They don't think anything is going to happen to them. But the devastation for the family is unbearable and you never recover."

Michael's sister Christina, 25, has not returned to work since his death. His parents are attending a bereavement support group.

The sum of \$500 was donated to the scholarship by businesses, friends and family and they plan to make it available annually.

"Even if other people don't donate, Steven and I will every year. And that way at least one student will always get a scholarship."

The award will be available for the May intake of Michael's program and the Borutskis hope that it will go to one of their son's classmates.

"From the time he was young he loved to design and build things"

*Wendy Borutski,
Michael's mother*

Information about the scholarship has recently come to the attention of the students in Michael's class and a few are considering it.

David Muller, 21, is in his last year of robotics and automation and says he didn't know Michael very well, but he would like to apply for the Borutski award.

"During our last year we have to dedicate all of our time to our projects, so any extra help I can get is appreciated," says Muller.

Michael's classmates say he kept to himself and listened to his Walkman in class. He was approachable, quiet and conservative, but they didn't know him very well because Michael had changed his program focus partway through the course.

"I think Michael was just picking up some extra courses. He wasn't in all of our classes," says Muller.

Kevin Schill, 22, is also in his last year of robotics and automation and remembered Michael from technical writing class.

"I apply for most scholarships around here," says Schill. "This one is specific to our program and it remembers someone we went to class with as well."

Sitting with her husband in the comfort of a living room lined with pictures of their only son, Wendy quietly says he was born to be an engineer.

"From the time he was young he loved to design and build things, to create and recreate things," Michael's mother smiled slightly, refolding her tissue and says he had a remote control car when he was young. "He would build something out of Lego, take the engine out of the car and then you would see motorized Lego running around."

However, Wendy says school was difficult for her son because he didn't like books, theory and studying. For this reason the scholarship will not be based on high academic standing.

"Being a student, you have to juggle all the things in your life and I think one of the hardest things for students is finances."

The scholarship will be awarded to two students in their last term of robotics and automation, who show leadership, teamwork and have a documented financial need.

Conestoga's associate registrar Janeen Hoover, who is responsible for contacting the family of anyone who dies on campus, has been

working with Michael's parents to establish the scholarship.

She says the family will review applications and make a selection of one or two students.

"Not necessarily the best student in the class, but progressing through the program," says Hoover, who has been touched by Michael's death more than usual. She and Michael's mother used to be colleagues. Hoover still works with Michael's aunt, in the financial aid office.

She says many times she doesn't know the student who has died and on one hand she thinks not knowing him or her makes it easier to create an award in his or her memory.

But creating a scholarship in Michael's name is difficult.

"I don't want to do this because that means he's not here anymore," Hoover cried quietly.

But for the boy who played with KNex when he was small, and who fixed the neighbours' electric saws and bicycles, an award has been named. Michael did not get a chance to use his plane tickets to Ireland this spring where he and his cousin planned on going rock climbing. He will not own a design company. He will no longer touch people's lives.

Instead, his parents plan on preserving his memory through the scholarship, as well as by etching a plaque at a Hamilton pavilion on the Trans Canada Trail and purchasing a bench for the Western Falls waterfall in North Bay because he loved nature, hiking and climbing.

Student Services helping reduce year-end stress

By JEFF HEUCHERT

If all the stress from next week's exams is getting to you, then Student Services has the perfect solution.

On April 13 and 14, they will be holding a stress free zone, in Room 1B25.

At the event, which runs from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., students will have the opportunity to sign up for a 10-minute session of massage therapy or reflexology.

College counsellor Joan Magazine says they're trying to create an atmosphere where students can relax, because she knows they get stressed with exams.

She says the event raises awareness about stress management as well, and gives students an opportunity to learn stress management skills. "I do believe the event brings value," she says.

Students who come to the room can expect soft music, aromatherapy, as well as some stress balls, to squeeze away your anxiety.

This is the third semester in a row Student Services has run the event.

Magazine says they've received good feedback in the past. As well, this event is a good way of letting students know Student Services can help.

She says more students have accessed their services in the past after this event.

The stress free zone is being co-sponsored by the CSI, which will



(Photo by Jeff Heuchert)

First-year early childhood education student Kathryn Etcovitch is feeling the stress on April 3 from end of the year assignments and tests. She is shown in the cafeteria.

be providing couches, a popcorn machine and water cooler. They also put money towards having the specialists.

For those students who are looking for more information, Student Services will also be providing handouts in the room, on dealing with stress, good nutrition, healthy, simple snacks and a stress questionnaire.

Google to offer e-mail

By TIM MURPHY

Your account is reaching its maximum capacity.

For many Hotmail and Yahoo e-mail users, this is a common phrase, but Google's new e-mail service may solve all that.

Google, based in Mountain View, Calif., has announced they will be providing an e-mail service called Gmail, which will have a storage capacity of 1000 megabytes.

This is more than 500 times the capacity of Hotmail.

"The idea is that your mail can stay in there forever," said Wayne Rosing, vice-president of engineering at Google in a CNET news interview.

According to press releases, Google plans to profit from the service by inserting advertisements into e-mail messages.

Yahoo is fighting back, after randomly sending out e-mail promotions to subscribers, upgrading them to 100MB of disk space for free.

Yahoo is also giving 4MB of free storage and offers 100MB for \$49.99.

A description on its Web site said Gmail will rely on search technology to find messages, removing the need for file folders.

This means finding your e-mail would be similar to searching for a webpage.

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Where does all that water go?

By JAMES CLARK

If the area is struck by a 100-year storm you may have to put on your rubber boots and raincoat, but you will not have to worry about a flood at Conestoga College.

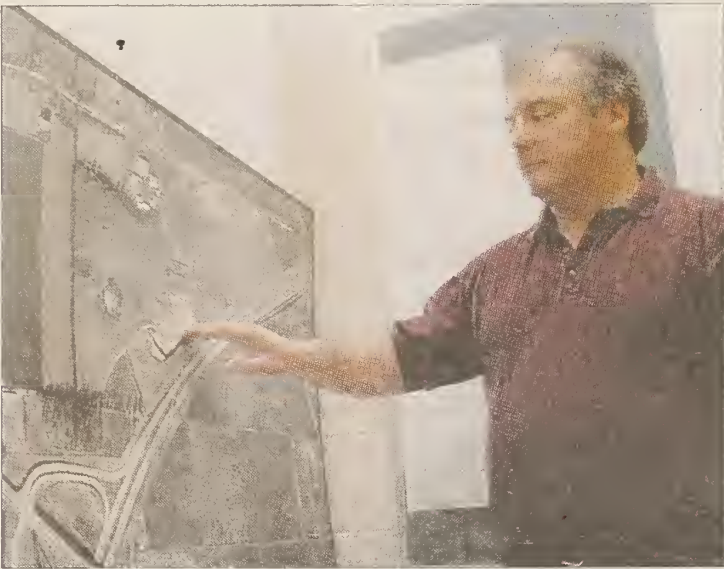
Barry Milner, head of physical resources at the college, said area bylaws require the college to be responsible for managing the run-off at every one of the college's campuses, even in the event of such a storm.

A 100-year storm is the worst storm an area could get in a 100-year period.

Hard surfaces of the college require the most attention. They include parking lots, roadways, sidewalks and rooftops. Other areas, such as the sports fields, are natural and allow for water to absorb into the soil.

The Doon campus alone has a parking area large enough for more than 3,300 cars to park.

Most of the water that runs off rooftops and the parking lots is directed to one of the more scenic areas of the campus – the pond by



Barry Milner, head of physical resources at Conestoga College, points at the college pond in a picture that was taken in the late '60s.

the cafeteria.

"Many people think that pond is spring fed," said Milner. "It is not. All of that water is from rainfall."

If there is too much run-off two pumps take water from the main pond and pump it through underground pipes to a second pond located by parking lot one and the Woodworking Centre. Off of this

second pond is an underground retention area that was created in the middle of the '90s, after the second pond overflowed.

The third pond is located just off of Highway 401 and Homer Watson Boulevard. This pond, which cost the college \$110,000 to construct, was put in when the E-wing was built.

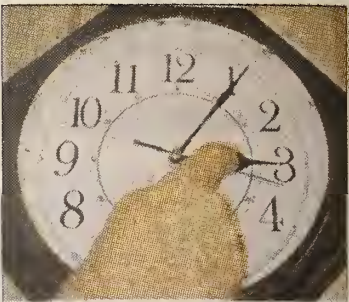
Peter Schlei, the lead-hand of groundskeeping at the college, said the cost of putting in the pond is high because a lot of planning goes into the operation.

The college had to consult the Grand River Conservation Authority and get both the City of Kitchener and the Ministry of Transportation's approval. They also needed to consult an engineer to design the pond.

"We even have certain plants that we had to plant around the pond," said Schlei.

Plants are put in to prevent the erosion of the soil into the pond.

He said the new pond requires cleaning, but overall it is more efficient because of an interlock rock bottom.



(Photo by Carla Kowalyk)

Interesting fact

According to an article at www.sleepanddreams.com, accidents increase by seven per cent in daylight.



(Photo by James Clark)

Attentive

Ed Griffith instructs Grade 4, 5 and 6 students at a regional skills competition in Conestoga College's recreation centre.



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New \$100 bill, new features

By JAMES CLARK

Those of us lucky enough to have a \$100 bill may notice something a little different about the c-note these days.

According to the Bank of Canada's website, the bill has new security features that will make it more difficult for it to be duplicated by counterfeiters.

In addition to the traditional security features, the bill has four new features including a holographic stripe, a watermarked portrait and a thread woven right into the bill.

Staff Sergeant Wally Hogg, of the Waterloo Regional Police Services, says counterfeit money is a big problem for the Kitchener-Waterloo area, but it isn't the larger bills that are usually duplicated.

"The new hundred won't have much of an impact," said Hogg. "The 10s and 20s are reason for the most concern."

He said last year alone there were 1,849 counterfeit bills reported to police.

Theresa Gauthier, a financial service representative and former teller at TD Bank of Canada, echoed Hogg's statement.

"The smaller bills are the biggest problem. Banks and stores always scrutinize the bigger bills," she said.

Gauthier said her branch finds an average of three counterfeit bills a week.

"People get most of the counterfeit money from the bank machines," she said.

Hogg said people spending fake bills also prey on small stores because they know the employees will not be able to spot phoney money.

"People with this money go store to store to store all along one street. They may spend \$2 and get \$18 back," said Hogg.

He said if a person comes across a bill they think may be counterfeit they should bring it to their bank or to the police to get it examined.

"Unfortunately, the last person who has the bill will be the one who loses out," said Hogg.

The front of the new bill, which was released March 17, has a portrait of former prime minister Robert Borden. The backside of the bill commemorates Canada's map-making history with a satellite image of Canada and an outline of New France.

The Bank of Canada will release a new \$20 and \$50 bill later in the year. The \$20 bill will honour the artwork of Bill Reid and the \$50 bill will have a nation-building theme.

However, all older bills will still be accepted as legal tender.

Spoke can now be read online!

For the latest college, entertainment and sports news, as well as games, puzzles, weather and reference links, visit www.conestogac.on.ca/spoke





(Photo by Petr Cihacek)

Knights at Toronto's Medieval Times dinner theatre engage in a spectacular sword fight. Located at Exhibition Place, Medieval Times is a popular tourist destination.

A knight to remember

Medieval Times takes you to another world

By PETR CIHACEK

With their wooden lances mercifully pointed at their opponent's chests, the two mounted knights start charging, getting closer to each other at a sinister speed. Everyone in the arena stops breathing and our hearts beat faster than the horses' hoofs pummeling the sandy floor.

And then the crash.

Splinters from a broken lance go flying and one of the knights gets knocked off his large black horse.

As the defeated warrior goes down, the excitement and noise elevates.

Hundreds of spectators cheer for the victorious knight and watch the other scramble off the floor to get his revenge. He takes a large sword and charges at the other, now dismounted, knight. A spectacular sword fight breaks out and the gloomy Medieval Times arena lightens with camera flashes and sparks flying off the clashing swords.

We all scream with excitement as every swing of a sword, every slash of an axe, makes us forget that we live in a world filled with smog, road rage and e-mail spam offering Viagra, and brings us deeper and deeper into the Middle Ages.

And that's what Toronto's Medieval Times is all about.

Located in the Exhibition Place on Lakeshore Boulevard, the venue's exterior does not exactly look like a medieval castle, but the very first step you take through the main gate magically brings you back to the 11th century.

From the medieval clothing of the staff to the colourful heraldry on the walls, there is almost nothing left to remind you that not far

from you are dozens of motorists losing their tempers in Toronto's traffic jams. Amazing steel armours are displayed in every room and through large windows, you can see and admire the knights' beautiful stallions whose faint scent can be detected in some parts of the building, immersing you instantly into a royal castle.

Unfortunately, not everything is so stylish and items like pool tables and video games machines spoil the medieval feeling.

Tickets for the show, which include supper and a tournament, sell at \$59.95 for adults and \$41.95 for children under 12. However, if you decide to visit the dinner and theatre, be prepared to spend more than that. As you are required to arrive at least one hour before the show, you will have plenty of time to check out all the bars, shops packed with everything from Medieval Times t-shirts to swords, and other money-sucking attractions. For only \$2, a dark-clothed executioner will let you into the castle's museum of torture, a dungeon full of torture instruments accompanied by vivid explanations of their use.

If you are in for a fun, team-oriented challenge, you should take the Royal Quest, an approximately 40 minute mission full of physical and mental tasks. For \$18, you can take the Knight's Challenge or the King's Challenge that we took. To complete the quest and save the king's life, we had to go through 10 chambers and "kill" enemy knights, shoot from a cannon, walk on a beam while trying to avoid being hit by swinging axes, and other fun tasks.

After completing the quest we were summoned to the castle's

large oval arena for the feast and tournament.

Soon after we were seated in our comfy seats and served our first drinks, a ravishing theatrical introduction mysteriously enveloped in fake mist started off the amazing show.

Feasting on a royal menu of roasted chicken, spare rib and herb-roasted potato, we sometimes forgot to chew as we watched a spectacular demonstration of the knights' horsemanship skills that were to set the mood for the tournament.

"Wow, I want to work here," I heard my voice excitedly yelling into my girlfriend's ear as we watched mounted knights in superb colourful costumes parading through the arena, sunbathing their egos in the cheers of fanatic spectators.

And the cheers got even louder when the first knight got knocked off his horse and helplessly fell to the sand.

It was an amazingly thrilling experience. The long lances being splintered against shields of metal and knights flying off their running horses, it all looked so real.

Unfortunately, the sword fights that followed each jousting match did not look so real. Sometimes it was obvious that it was staged as some moves were reminiscent of WWE wrestling.

But even though they knew it was a fake, the spectators cheered. We all did.

We all felt the amazing mystical atmosphere and applauded even minutes after the show was over, as if we were trying to postpone our departure from the magical castle and into the outside world full of smog, road rage and e-mail spam offering Viagra.

Alumni Association sells movie tickets

By TIM MURPHY

The Conestoga College Alumni Association is selling movie tickets below the concession price.

Monica Himmelman, alumni services officer, said Galaxy Theatres and Cineplex Odeon have sold the Alumni Association tickets at group rates.

"It's a great program," said Himmelman, mentioning the tickets are limited to the Kitchener-Waterloo area. They can be used in the Galaxy Theatres in the following locations: Hespeler Road, Cambridge, Fairway Road, Kitchener, and King Street, Waterloo.

Adult tickets are \$8, and chil-

dren's tickets are \$5. Each ticket is valid for one year.

"It's to provide a service to the college community," she said. "It's for staff, faculty and students."

Movie tickets aren't the only tickets the alumni association sells.

Himmelman said over the winter season they sold 292 lift tickets for Chicopee ski hill.

"In the summer we sell discounted tickets to many theme parks," she added.

More than 2,000 tickets are sold each summer, and anybody can buy one she said.

For more information on purchasing discounted tickets, contact the development and alumni relations department at ext. 3459.

Which horror flick is worth the money?

By DESIREE FINHERT

Two out of three horror movies in theatres were filmed in Canada, but which one is worth our dollar.

The suspense thriller Taking Lives starring Angelina Jolie is similar to a previous Jolie movie, Bone Collector.

In Taking Lives, Jolie's performance is blasé, but Ethan Hawke (Gattica) is captivating as a somewhat juvenile crime witness.

The plot is well organized with two good shocks and two carefully covered twists near the end.

However, the aspect defining this serial killer movie is the location.

Director D.J. Caruso (television series Dark Angel and Smallville) stayed true to the novel by Michael Pye and filmed the movie on location in Montreal and around Quebec.

If you loved the cult horror movie 28 Days Later, you'll love the remake of Dawn of the Dead.

However, the only Canadian to appear in Taking Lives is one of our favourite Lost Boys Kiefer Sutherland.

Toronto is where Dawn of the Dead was filmed, just next door to the Taking Lives location.

If you loved the cult horror movie 28 Days Later, you'll love the remake of Dawn of the Dead, from which it derived its concept.

The zombie sequel to George Romero's Night of the Living Dead was first made in 1978.

Director Zach Snyder's 2004 vision is a grimly executed illustration of society being devoured by flesh-eating zombies, whose bites kill then reanimate their victims.

Snyder uses intense graphic imagery and an anxious plot.

He successfully balances the gore by capitalizing on the serenity of the movie's main location, a

shopping mall, and introducing creative ways for the characters to keep occupied under the circumstances.

It was enjoyable to see Canadian child-star Sarah Polley, from Avonlea, running for her life as the functioning nurse, Anna.

The simple plot is not devoid of layers.

Performances by Ving Rhames (Miami Vice) and Jake Weber (the Cell) help to depict the many faces of humanity in chaos.

There is no overacting in this rendition of the end of the world; instead the actors evoke great pathos.

At the other end of the scary-movie scale is the sober stay-at-home thriller Secret Window.

Unfortunately, this flick was completely without Canadian influence, although from the location it is difficult to believe it was not filmed in Muskoka.

Here is another simple plot, this one involving a writer, played by Johnny Depp (Pirates of the Caribbean) and his story. Oddly enough, this movie about a story was first a story by Stephen King entitled, Secret Window, Secret Garden.

There are few thrills and screams, but a slowly unwinding series of events will keep you tense until you prematurely figure out the ending half an hour early.

This is a movie to watch curled up on the couch with a cocoa on a stormy night. It's creepy, but the real attraction to this 90-minute piece is Depp.

As expected, Depp is only slightly less interesting as Mort Rainey than he was as Captain Jack Sparrow.

Depp had less to work with to create his character and yet he still creates the portrait of a confused, distraught hermit.

It's as if Depp's dignity was once again challenged for entertainment sake.

The movies are rated out of five stars:

Taking Lives - ★★★

Dawn of the Dead - ★★★★★

Secret Window - ★★



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(Photos by James Doyle)

The Twin City Harmonizers has approximately 55 members who sing everything from traditional barbershop and doo-wop music, to show tunes and inspirational ballads. They have been a chapter since 1946.

Singing from the same song sheet

By JAMES DOYLE

Four-part harmony, a cappella voices and a barber pole. This is barbershop music and it is what the Twin City Harmonizers love.

Barbershop is a style of music that can be traced back to the early 20th century. It got its name because while men were in the barbershop getting their hair cut and "shooting the breeze," they would often start singing, and the term bar-

bershop music stuck, said Terry Hallman, the Harmonizers' musical director.

Hallman says that barbershop music consists of four parts; the tenor, lead, baritone and bass. What sets barbershop apart from traditional choral music, according to Hallman, is that the melody line, or the lead, is not the highest part. The tenors, who "usually sing in their falsetto voice, not their natural voice," says Hallman, sing above the melody. Below the leads is the baritone. They "have a range similar to the leads." The fourth part is the bass, who "tend to be on the root of the chord," said Hallman. The bass sings the lowest part.

The Harmonizers chapter consists of approximately 55 men. They have been a chapter since 1946 and are members of SPEBSQSA or The Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America. As well as the performing chorus, the Harmonizers have four active quartets and one "very active octet."

also sing novelty songs and are putting together a show based on the music of Louie Armstrong for next year. "That's a nice song (It's a Wonderful World by Louis Armstrong), we've had that in our repertoire for upwards of 10 years," Hallman said after a comment about the chorus doing a particularly nice job on the song.

Hallman himself has been a barbershopper for 32 years. "My wife always keeps track of this by the age of our son. I joined just after he was born, so I am starting my 32nd year."

The retired elementary school teacher says he has always been involved in music. "I had been a longtime drum and bugle player, both a horn player and on-field drum major. But after I got married, it was a life I couldn't go back to. It was too much of a strain and I was a young teacher at the time, so I was without a musical hobby for a long time."

A former high school teacher of Hallman's, who also sang in his church choir at the time, invited him out to a practice and "I've been there ever since," he laughs. Hallman says that most guys come out with a friend, but adds, "we always invite people

to come out if they're interested."

The Harmonizers meet every Tuesday night at 7:30 at St. Stevens Lutheran Church, 248 Highland Rd. E. The Harmonizers also perform around the community and have their annual show April 24 at

the Centre in the Square. The Harmonizers will be joined by Bluevale's 60 Voice Chamber Choir, as well as Bluevale's smaller jazz choir. Bluevale's choir is directed by Nancy Kidd, who is "a prominent choral director in the twin-city area at Bluevale Collegiate and very well respected throughout Canada," according to Hallman. The show is entitled With A Song In My Heart, which is the title of a movie that the chapter and quartets will be performing songs from. "It's going to be, we think, quite a good show," says Hallman. He says that the chorus has some new songs that the guys really enjoy singing.

Tickets are \$20 for the balcony and \$25 for orchestra and mezzanine seats. For more show information contact John Duggan at 621-2275.

Hallman says that in addition to the enjoyment of singing, friendships are what ultimately keep barbershoppers together. "I think it's the camaraderie of the men that are in it. We draw from all backgrounds, all faiths, all social/economic backgrounds and it becomes a way of life. Families are very often included in our activities."

Chapter activities include two Ontario District conventions. One is held in the spring, with the second in the fall. These conventions are held to select the Ontario District champions. The spring convention, which will be held this April 16-18 in Niagara Falls, will select the quartet champions and the international representatives. The fall convention selects the chorus champions and international reps. The Toronto Northern Lights, who finished second at the 2003

International Convention, which took place in Montreal, won last fall's contest and will again represent Ontario at the international competition in Louisville, Ky., June 27 - July 4.

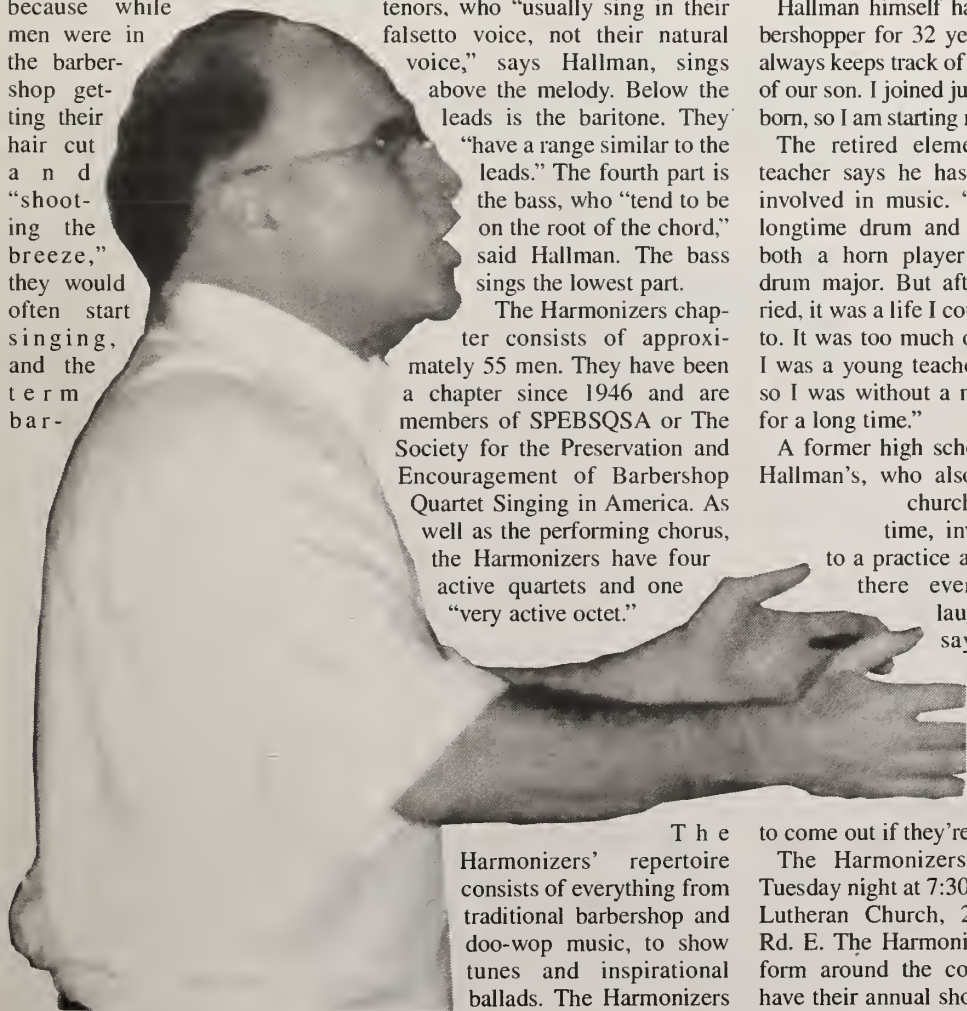
Barbershop is truly "an international hobby" says Hallman, with quartets from Australia, Sweden, England and Germany all competing at international. The International convention also has a category for college quartets in the summer and a separate senior international competition in the winter.

The Harmonizers do not have anyone competing at this spring's convention as they are gearing up for their show the following week.

The Harmonizers and the entire Ontario District Association of Chapters of SPEBSQSA also support and raise money for Harmonize For Speech. Hallman estimates that close to \$25,000 has come back into the region for speech programs and equipment. They also supply financial aid to university students going through for speech-related subjects. To learn more about Harmonize For Speech, go to www.harmonize4speech.org.

Hallman says that along with supporting Harmonize For Speech, barbershoppers lend support to teaching and participation in music. "And that is another mandate of the barbershop organization, to encourage and promote the continued teaching and participation in choral music," Hallman says this is more important now with music feeling the effects of budget cuts.

To learn more about the Twin City Harmonizers, go to www.twincityharmonizers.org.



CSI would love to see more clubs

By JASON SMITH

Conestoga Students Inc. (CSI) is encouraging students at the school to develop more college-oriented clubs.

The number of CSI clubs in the school has progressively grown over the last few years and Justin Falconer, CSI president, would like to see the trend continue.

A few years ago, the college didn't have a single club on campus. Not one. Today we have three.

CSI hopes these numbers continue to increase.

"The students of Conestoga would only benefit from more and more clubs being formed by other students," said Falconer. "CSI

wants to promote student-based initiatives and clubs are a good way to do that."

Although the numbers here at Conestoga are growing slowly, they're miniscule in comparison to the number of university student-formed organizations.

Canadian universities generally have 20 to 30 clubs on campus, all of which are normally popular among the students.

So why aren't there more student organizations here at Conestoga? Good question indeed.

The school's three existing clubs have had their share of success in the college and have all been able to reach out to students and be an enjoyable experience for those

involved.

The Christian fellowship club was CSI's first student organization at Conestoga and should continue to grow in popularity with radio segments on CJIQ and much more.

The Conestoga Optimist Club is the first college-based Optimist club in Canada and meets regularly in hopes of helping the college, community and those within.

And after years of being run out of the guidance area, the Conestoga Gay-Lesbian-Bisexual-Transgender (GLBT) club has now become much more public.

The previously mentioned organizations have gained notoriety in the college and are able to organize

group functions, trips and more.

To top it all off, CSI offers \$800 of allowable club reimbursement (with receipts) and often creates and prints flyers free of charge for any club in the school.

With these facts in mind, the question is posed once again. Why aren't there more student-formed organizations or CSI clubs at Conestoga?

The answer is unknown and CSI said they would certainly appreciate more clubs being developed, but they don't want to create them because they don't want to be the ones that have to maintain them.

Falconer says the students should create the clubs and maintain them.

"As the president of CSI, I feel more students need to be involved in student life and they need to take initiative," said Falconer. "CSI is here to support, promote and encourage clubs to form and develop."

And if you ask any member of the Christian fellowship, Conestoga Optimist or GLBT club, they will probably tell you it's worth it.

Students interested in forming a club on campus are encouraged to pick up a package containing an application form, rules, expectations and more in the CSI office located in the Sanctuary.

All clubs must have at least 10 student members.

Sweet treats don't have to add to your waistline

By KRISTEN MCMURPHY

Hot weather and ice cream go hand in hand, making summer a dangerous time for health-conscious people.

Don't let your desire to stay healthy keep you from getting the occasional cool treat this summer. Despite what some people may think, there is a huge line of healthy choices available.

A small McFlurry at McDonald's has 19 grams of fat and 534 calories. On the more encouraging side, a small vanilla ice cream cone from McDonald's has only 4.1 grams of fat and 148 calories. The Fruit 'n Yogurt Parfait isn't a frozen item, but it's delicious and a good alternative to a McFlurry, with only 2.1 grams of fat and 151 calories.

Baskin Robbins is stocked full of fat-laden flavours of ice cream, but evens it out with a large selection of frozen yogurt and other lower fat frozen menu items. It also carries

an assortment of fat-free ice cream, sherbet and frozen yogurt.

Yogen Fruze uses 98 per cent fat-free yogurt in its products. As a healthy bonus, it also uses fresh fruit and serves a variety of other products based around fruit.

Dairy Queen has an exhaustive menu of options but the healthier choices include a strawberry sundae with seven grams of fat and 240 calories, a DQ sandwich with six grams of fat and 200 calories or one of the fudge bars, which are fat-free and have only 50 calories.

It's comforting to know that there are healthy summer treats to choose from, but once in a while it's OK to opt for the double chocolate fudge brownie sundae instead of something more nutritious.

For more detailed nutritional information on these and other food products, ask for a nutritional information guide the next time you're treating yourself.



(Photo by Tim Murphy)

Furry friends

Lollipop the miniature horse shares an enclosure with a goat at the petting zoo in Waterloo Park. The two animals were enjoying the warm spring weather earlier this month.

Battle heats up to eliminate spam

By TIM MURPHY

E-mail spam may become a thing of the past.

Tens of millions of e-mails pass through spam filters each day, but a group of researchers at Microsoft think they have a solution, according to CNET.com news.

The theory works on the idea that senders of mail should have to pay for it, not the receiver.

"The basic idea is that we are trying to shift the equation to make it possible and necessary for a sender to 'pay' for e-mail," said Ted Wobber of the Microsoft Research group.

E-mail users would not pay using money, but rather with computer resources as the computer would be required to work out cryptographic puzzles.

"For any piece of e-mail I send,

it will take a small amount of computing power of about 10 to 20 seconds," said Wobber in a CNET news interview.

"If I don't know you, I have to prove to you that I have spent a little bit of time in resources to send you that e-mail."

He said it means a spammer's computer is slowed down, but regular users do not notice a delay.

The research group said it calculated that if there are 80,000 seconds in a day, a price of a 10-second decryption time would mean spammers would only be able to send about 8,000 messages a day.

"Spam is probably going to get worse before it gets better, and I really hope it does not get to a point that it deters people using e-mail."

Microsoft may have a solution

E-mail spam isn't the only pest about to be swatted by Microsoft. Internet Explorer could see an update that would block pop-up ads in 2005.

Microsoft won't be the first to offer pop-up protection.

They will be following in the footsteps of Opera, Mozilla and Netscape, rival Internet browsers.

Google is also offering services to protect Internet users from pop-ups.

Google's Toolbar 2.0, available from www.google.ca, sits at the top of a Web browser, allowing people to complete searches without going to the Google homepage.

The tool bar also has a pop-up stopper built into it, which blocks almost all ads.



(Photo by Michelle Taylor)

Reflections

The Grand River is quiet now but will soon be a busy place.

2004 Major League Baseball preview

By JEFF HEUCHERT

The 2004 Major League Baseball season is underway.

The season began with a two-game set between the New York Yankees and Tampa Bay Devil Rays in Tokyo. Last week the remaining 28 teams began their pursuit towards the fall classic.

Last season, baseball fans were treated to an exceptional season, with not just an exciting playoffs, but also an incredible World Series that concluded with the Florida Marlins upsetting the Yankees.

With significant trades and signings this off-season, by many different teams, divisions should be much closer than in the past.

Lowly teams such as the Kansas City Royals, Houston Astros and Baltimore Orioles, just to name a few, have drastically improved their teams.

Nobody could have predicted last year's World Series champions, and it's probably going to be even harder this year, but I'll try anyway. Here now, are my predictions for the six division winners, as well as two wild cards, for this season.

The gap between the New York Yankees and the rest of the American League East is getting closer, but the other four teams just aren't there yet.

For any other team, losing high calibre players such as Roger Clemens, Andy Pettitte, David Wells and Alfonso Soriano would spell disaster, but Yankees owner George Steinbrenner wouldn't let that happen. He spent the money

and acquired Kevin Brown, Gary Sheffield, Javier Vazquez and Alex Rodriguez.

It's scary, but the Yankees are just as good, if not better, than they were last year.

The Boston Red Sox made a significant change of their own when they signed free agent Curt Schilling, but they'll still fall just short of the Yankees once again.

The Orioles will be a much-improved team as well. They surprised everybody with an aggressive off-season that saw them sign free agents Javy Lopez, Miguel Tejada and Rafael Palmeiro.

And of course, there's the Toronto Blue Jays. They proved last season they have hitters, so they went out and signed a horde of pitchers such as Pat Hentgen, Miguel Batista and Ted Lilly.

With all these teams improving this could be the last season the Yankees win the division for a while.

I'll make the first of my three upset predictions and say the Kansas City Royals will win the AL Central.

Last season they improved greatly when they won more than 80 games and finished only seven games back in the division.

They already had a very strong core group of young players such as Carlos Beltran and Mike Sweeney, but this season they've added veterans Kevin Appier, Benito Santiago and Juan Gonzalez. These players bring playoff experience to a young team. The Royals are on their way to major success, maybe sooner



than later.

The Royals should only have stiff competition from the Minnesota Twins. Although the Twins have won the division two straight years, they didn't make any transactions in the off-season, and should begin to fall behind.

The AL West is wide open. Although the Oakland Athletics have won it the past two years, with the departure of Miguel Tejada they've gotten worse.

I think the Seattle Mariners will take back the division they dominated just a few years ago. They haven't improved their team, but the Mariners are still good. They'll win the division because Oakland has gotten worse.

Don't count out the Anaheim Angels though. With the addition of Vladimir Guerrero, the Angels boast one of the most intimidating offences in the league.

The AL Wild Card race won't be much of a race at all. The Red Sox will win it with ease. They have pitchers and hitters that make them better than almost any team in the majors. With all their players receiving playoff experience last season, the Sox should be, at the very least, in the AL Championship again. The Blue Jays, Angels and Twins should be able to stick in this race for a good part of the season.

The National League East is finally up for grabs after 10 years of dominance from the Atlanta Braves. With the loss of veterans Greg Maddux, Gary Sheffield and Javy Lopez, the Braves will find themselves on the outside of the playoffs.

For my second upset prediction I pick the Philadelphia Phillies to capture the division. They only improved by six wins last season, but with the Braves worsening, as well as the Montreal Expos, with the loss of Guerrero and Vazquez, the Phillies are the best left.

Now I'm sure many of you are wondering, what about the defending World Series champs? Well, as we've seen so many times before, defending champions struggle the next year, and the same will happen to the Florida Marlins. Last season the Anaheim Angels didn't even make the playoffs after their championship run, and two seasons ago the Arizona Diamondbacks followed up their championship season with a first-round playoff elimination. It becomes difficult for these teams because the expectations are so high.

The NL Central should house the greatest division race of all. The Houston Astros only lost the division by one game last season, and with the additions of Clemens and Pettitte their biggest problem last season, pitching, is solved. The Astros have a bulked up lineup with Jeff Kent, Jeff Bagwell and Lance Berkman to accommodate their all-star pitching staff.

Their only real competition will come from the Chicago Cubs. Maddux finishes off what is now

the best pitching rotation in the majors. The Cubs finally got a taste of post-season success last year and will be itching for some more.

The St. Louis Cardinals will be good as well. With great hitters, pitching will continue to be the only thing holding them back.

The NL West should be close as well, but the San Francisco Giants should have it for the second straight season. They haven't done anything to improve, but their division isn't that strong. The team still has plenty of pop, with Barry Bonds showing no sign of slowing down. This is a team of capable veterans, who can still play like they're 10 years younger.

Now time for my final upset prediction, and I'm sure nobody's expecting this, but I'm picking the San Diego Padres to win the NL Wild Card. New uniforms and a new stadium aren't all that fans can look forward to this year. The Padres greatly improved their team with the additions of David Wells, Brian Giles and Jeff Cirillo. They already have sluggers Phil Nevin and Ryan Klesko, and if pitcher Trevor Hoffman can stay healthy, the Padres could stun a lot of people.

The Cubs, Marlins and Braves, as well as the Los Angeles Dodgers, who are just a few quality hitters short, will all challenge the Padres.

Skipping ahead six months, I predict for the 2004 World Series, the Houston Astros will defeat the Boston Red Sox.

Now, only time will tell how many of my predictions will be right, or terribly wrong. >

Lady Condors compete in tournament

By JASON SMITH

Conestoga's female hockey squad has continued to defy the odds and laugh in the face of adversity since hitting the ice at the start of this school year.

Now, months after first dropping the puck and later gaining permanent ice-time at the rec centre, the lady Condors reached one of their most important goals on March 12, when they took to the ice as a team, competing in a one-day tournament at Toronto's Sheridan College.

But the players weren't alone as they took part in their first competitive game as a team.

Kevin Barnes, Scott Bradley, Scott Foster, Jeff Jones and "Banny" from the Conestoga male varsity team manned the bench as members of the team's coaching staff.

Marlene Ford, Conestoga's athletic director, donned the mask, pads, blocker and trapper, and



(Photo by Jason Smith)

Members of the women's hockey team and coaches take part in a recent women's practice at the recreation centre. Ice time is 7 a.m. on Tuesdays and 3:30 p.m. on Thursdays.

played net for the team throughout the tournament. Ford is also responsible for organizing the event for the Conestoga squad.

The tournament consisted of eight teams: Conestoga, Mohawk, Seneca, University of Toronto Mississauga, University of Toronto

Scarborough, Lambton, Centennial and the host Sheridan College.

The team opened the tournament on a good note, defeating Sheridan 4-3. The Condors were up 3-0 in the second period when Sheridan began to come back. But Conestoga held on to the lead and

finished the game triumphantly in their first game together.

"We all played really good together, especially considering it was our first game ever as a team," said Nicole Wick, a second-year recreation and leisure studies student and member of the women's team.

Conestoga played Lambton College in their second game of the tournament, and after a rough game against a very strong team with a lot of depth, the ladies fell victim to an 8-0 whitewash.

After many penalties and injuries during the game, some players said they felt they gained a reputation of being a "rough and tough team" when one of their defensive pairs took out a few members of the opposition.

Conestoga wrapped up the tournament against U of T Mississauga where they were defeated 2-0 in a close and competitive game.

When all was said and done, the

team was awarded the tournament's fair play award and walked away confident in themselves after the first of many future head-to-head competitions.

"The tournament was a great success and the girls all had a great time and lots of fun," said Wick. "We're hoping this can lead to a possible varsity women's team for next year."

Tiffany Blamire, Mamie Sealey and Adrienne Schmidt, all first-year recreation and leisure studies students, began organizing ice-time for women earlier in the school year in an attempt to create an ongoing female hockey program at the college.

The three young ladies have played key roles in helping give any interested females the opportunity to take to the ice and prove themselves worthy of a future college team.

In fact, their ultimate goal is for Conestoga to form a female varsity hockey team in the near future.

Another disappointing year for Raptors

The Toronto Raptors had high hopes upon entering the 2003-04 National Basketball Association (NBA) season.

The Canadian squad dreamed of stepping onto the hard wood floor of the Air Canada Centre (ACC) this spring as a serious playoff contender. The Raptors' roster, fans and supporters all rallied behind the club, hoping to see a playoff drive that would prove the Raptors are one of the elite teams in the league.

Some fans even felt an NBA championship was within reach.

Then reality set in.

Playoffs are on the horizon and the Raptors are nowhere to be seen.

As the season quickly comes to a close and some teams begin their preparations for the post-season, the Raptors find

themselves a disgruntled mess with nowhere left to turn.

Currently sitting with a disheartening 30-45 record, the "dinos" are playing a much less than average level of .400 ball. To put it lightly, the club hasn't played anywhere near its full potential.

In fact, there are only six teams with worse records in the entire league — the Washington Wizards, Orlando Magic, Atlanta Hawks, Chicago Bulls, L.A. Clippers and Phoenix Suns.

With this in mind, many fans have become frustrated with Toronto's performance and after looking at the impressive Raptors roster, it's easy to see why. Nobody knows what's going wrong.



Jason Smith

Opinion

Toronto arguably has one of the best rosters in the league and hits the floor with plenty of depth every single game. With Vince Carter, the Raptors possess one of the game's greatest players. His 22.6 points per game leads the team, yet doesn't seem to be enough. The big question mark with Carter is his inability to stay in the game and stay healthy for more than a couple games at a time. Due to constant injuries and a questionable desire and heart to play the game when it matters most, fans are wondering if Toronto would be better without him.

But Carter isn't the only weapon of choice in the Raptors' arsenal. Morris Peterson has all the talent in the world, but is yet to reach his full potential. Rookie Chris Bosh has an outstanding future ahead of him and is already one of the big fan favourites in the ACC. Completing a three-way, six-man trade earlier in the season allowed Toronto to secure one of the best all-around players in the game, Jalen Rose, from the Chicago Bulls. The Raps also received Donyell Marshall in the deal, who is second on the team scoring list with 16.2 points per game.

Marshall has possibly been the highlight of the Toronto team through the second half of the season. Add recently acquired Rod Strickland to the mix and many wonder just why the Raps are missing the playoffs once again.

Even management is beginning to throw their arms in the air wondering how the franchise is falling apart. General manager Glen Grunwald was recently fired after struggling to improve the club for several years. Grunwald, however, can't be blamed for the demise of Canada's only NBA team, as he has put together a great roster time and time again. It's not his fault the boys aren't delivering.

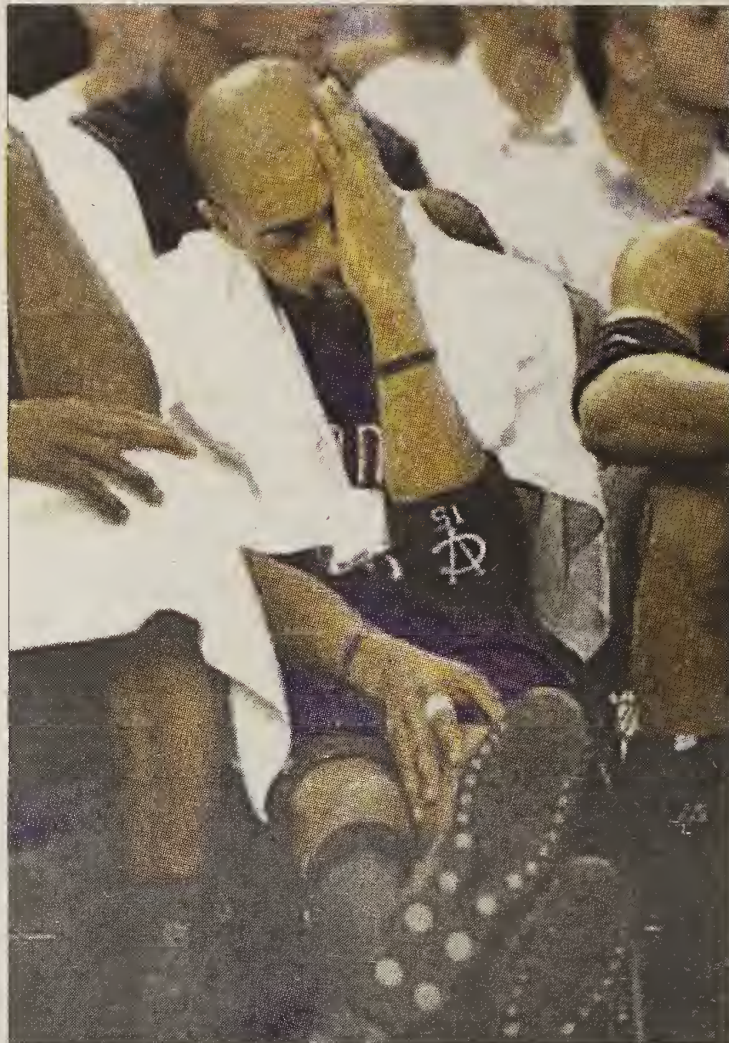
So what's the cure? What will it take for the Raptors to finally get the job done?

I may not be an expert, but if I were new GM Jack McCloskey, I'd say bye bye to Carter and bring in some more young talent to help out the amazing roster Toronto fans get to see all year long. This team has the potential to turn a lot of heads, but Carter has become very unreliable and may be causing more problems than he's solving.

There are no excuses for this poor display and Raptors fans can only hope to see continued improvement.

Once again, we just have to remind ourselves of the age-old adage. There's always next year.

But for now ... at least Toronto fans have the Maple Leafs to cheer for. Let's just hope they don't choke too.



(Internet photo)

The Raptors impressive lineup, which includes all-star Vince Carter, disappointed many fans this year when they failed to reach the playoffs for the second year in a row.

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